

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 292

E.O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: ANTI-LIN ANTI-CONFUCIUS MOVEMENT IN TIENTSIN

1. SUMMARY - USLO OFFICER VISITED TIENTSIN FEBRUARY 17-18 AS TOURIST. THE MOVEMENT TO CRITICIZE LIN PIAO AND CONFUCIUS HAS REACHED A HIGH PITCH THERE, WITH BIG-CHARACTER POSTERS AND OTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF THE CAMPAIGN HIGHLY VISIBLE THROUGHOUT THE CITY. THE CAMPAIGN APPEARS TO BE UNDER TIGHT PARTY CONTROL, HOWEVER, AND LIN AND CONFUCIUS ARE THE ONLY VISIBLE TARGETS SO FAR. END SUMMARY.

2. USLO OFFICER MCKINLEY AND HIS WIFE SPENT A DAY AND A HALF IN TIENTSIN OVER THE RECENT LONG WEEKEND. UNDER THE AUSPICES OF CHINA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SERVICE, THEY VISITED NANKAI UNIVERSITY, A WOOLEN MILL, AND THE TIENTSIN ART MUSEUM. A TWO-HOUR UNCHAPERONED WALK THROUGH THE DOWNTOWN SHOPPING AREA AT DUSK AFFORDED ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO GARNER IMPRESSIONS.

3. BIG-CHARACTER POSTERS APPEAR ON THE OUTSIDE WALLS OF NEARLY EVERY BUILDING IN TIENTSIN. FAR AND AWAY THE MOST COMMON SLOGANS ARE QUOTE CARRY THROUGH THE MOVEMENT TO CRITICIZE LIN AND CONFUCIUS TO THE END UNQUOTE AND QUOTE TO CRITICIZE LIN ONE MUST CRITICIZE CONFUCIUS, TO CUT WEEDS ONE MUST PULL UP THE ROOT UNQUOTE. A HALF-DOZEN OTHERS, ALL ALONG THE SAME LINES, WERE ALSO SEEN.

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4. CARICATURES OF LIN AND CONFUCIUS ON SHEETS OF PAPER THE SIZE OF LARGE ALBUM LEAVES WERE SEEN HANGING IN ROWS IN A DEPARTMENT STORE WINDOW, IN THE CORRIDORS AT NANKAI, IN FRONT OF A THEATER, AND AT SEVERAL PLACES INSIDE THE WOOLEN MILL. ALTHOUGH THE CARICATURES ARE SAID TO BE THE WORK OF INDIVIDUAL UNITS, ENOUGH REPETITION RECURS TO INDICATE A SINGLE POINT OF ORIGIN FOR MANY OF THEM. AMONG THE MORE COMMON ARE: A HUGE RED FIST CRUSHING ANT-LIKE FIGURES OF LIN AND CONFUCIUS; THE HEADS OF LIN AND CONFUCIUS IN SICKLY GREEN REPRESENTED AS ROTTEN FRUIT GROWING FROM A VINE LABELED QUOTE RESTRAIN ONESELF, RESTORE THE RITES UNQUOTE; LIN AND HIS WIFE IN WESTERN DRESS PREENING THEMSELVES BEFORE A MIRROR IN WHOSE FRAME ARE CARVED THE CHARACTERS FOR GENIUS. NO ONE ATTEMPTED TO PREVENT MCKINLEY FROM EXAMINING THESE CARICATURES, BUT REQUESTS TO PHOTOGRAPH THEM WERE REFUSED.

5. IN ADDITION TO BIG-CHARACTER POSTERS AND CARICATURES, MANY UNITS DISPLAY THREE-FOOT-SQUARE SHEETS OF PAPER STRUNG UP LIKE LAUNDRY ALONG THE INSIDE WALLS OR ACROSS THE TOP OF ROOMS. EACH CLOSELY WRITTEN SHEET, SIGNED AND RECENTLY DATED, DESCRIBES ONE INDIVIDUAL'S REACTION TO THE CAMPAIGN. PROFESSIONALLY PRINTED FOUR-COLOR POSTERS BEARING THE SLOGANS QUOTED IN PARA 3 HAVE BEEN PRODUCED TO SUPPLEMENT HAND-WRITTEN MATERIALS AND ARE WIDELY DISPLAYED, ESPECIALLY IN SHOP WINDOWS. BILLBOARDS OF THE TYPE WHICH USUALLY CARRY QUOTATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN NOW ALSO OCCASIONALLY BEAR CAMPAIGN SLOGANS. ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, WORKERS PROPAGANDA TEAMS FROM TIENTSIN FACTORIES PERFORMED ANTI-LIN, ANTI-CONFUCIUS SKITS IN CENTRAL SQUARE BEFORE A LARGE CROWD.

6. NANKAI UNIVERSITY IS FESTOONED WITH POSTERS, AND AN ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMAN SAID THAT STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN MASS MEETINGS, PREPARATION OF NEW MATERIALS AND VISITS TO FACTORIES TO HELP THE WORKERS CRITICIZE LIN AND CONFUCIUS.

7. COMMENT: THE ANTI-LIN, ANTI-CONFUCIUS CAMPAIGN IN TIENTSIN IS IMPRESSIVE BY ITS SIZE AND IS MUCH MORE VISIBLE THAN IN PEKING. THE CHINESE MCKINLEY MET SHOWED NO RELUCTANCE TO DISCUSS THE CAMPAIGN AND THE ATMOSPHERE THROUGHOUT THE VISIT WAS MARKEDLY FRIENDLY. THE WHOLE AFFAIR SEEMS FIRMLY UNDER PARTY CONTROL
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AS ILLUSTRATED BY A LABOR UNION OFFICIAL'S COMMENT THAT THE PARTY DIRECTS THE CAMPAIGN WHILE THE UNION MERELY HELPS IN ORGANIZING STUDY SESSIONS. MCKINLEY'S PERMISSION TO VISIT TIENTSIN IS AN EXCEPTION TO THE GROWING LIST OF TURNDOWNS FOR TOURIST TRAVEL IN CHINA. IT MAY WELL BE THAT PRC AUTHORITIES WANTED A WESTERN OBSERVER TO SEE A CITY WHERE THE CAMPAIGN APPEARS TO BE RUNNING WITHOUT A HITCH.
JENKINS

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